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### New exhibitions open at Montana museum of art & culture

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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July 3, 2007

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### **NEW EXHIBITIONS OPEN AT MONTANA MUSEUM OF ART & CULTURE**

#### **MISSOULA—**

Three exhibitions will open Thursday, July 12, at the Montana Museum of Art & Culture, located in the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center at The University of Montana.

“Henry Meloy: The Portraits” and “Rudy Remembered (1926-2007)” will be on view in the museum’s Paxson Gallery through Thursday, Aug. 9.

“Yellowstone Engraved: Images that Popularized Jackson, Moran, and America’s First National Park” will be in the museum’s Meloy Gallery through Saturday, Aug. 18.

“Henry Meloy: The Portraits” highlights the Montana native’s depictions of family and friends.

Meloy was born in **Townsend** in 1902. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and then the National Academy of Design in New York under Robert Henri. He finished his studies at the Art Students League in New York under John Carroll.

Before accepting a teaching job at Columbia University in 1940, Meloy taught private art lessons, obtained work as an illustrator and worked on several commissions for the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration.

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Meloy came to an untimely death at the age of 49 in 1951.

The style of his work parallels developments in modern art, with influences of the American Ashcan School to Abstract Expressionism. His portraits convey emotive detail while employing a modernist approach to line and form.

The portraits are part of a permanent loan to MMAC through the Henry Meloy Educational Trust.

After the exhibition's debut at MMAC, it will travel through a Montana Art Gallery Director's Association-sponsored tour to various venues throughout the state.

In "Rudy Remembered (1926-2007)," MMAC pays tribute to Rudy Autio, a Missoula hero and a luminary in the international contemporary ceramic world. Autio died of leukemia June 20.

He was born in Butte to a Finnish mining family and, in 1950, received a bachelor's degree from Montana State University-**Bozeman**, where he studied under legendary ceramicist Frances Senska. He went on to earn a master's degree in fine arts from Washington State University in **Pullman** in 1952 and later became a founding resident of the Archie Bray Foundation.

In 1957, he created the ceramics program at UM, where he taught until his retirement in 1983.

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Autio came to be recognized worldwide for his distinctive approach to the vessel form – large, figurative vessels with torso-like lobes that extend into three-dimensional space, incised with flowing, dreamlike female forms. Two of Autio's hallmark vessels were loaned to the museum by Lela Autio for this exhibit, which also will feature Autio's works from MMAC's Permanent Collection.

"Rudy Remembered" is paired with the exhibition "Henry Meloy: The Portraits" to highlight the unique relationship between the two men. Autio met Meloy and Meloy's brother Peter in **Helena**. Peter Meloy then introduced Autio to Archie Bray.

Autio admired Henry Meloy and his work. Meloy's stylistic influence can be seen in Autio's flowing female figures and horses. After Meloy's death, Autio was instrumental in getting his work recognized and in major museum collections.

"Rudy Remembered" will be open during the Rudy Autio Memorial, which will be held at 4 p.m. Saturday, July 21, in the Montana Theatre in the PAR/TV Center.

"Yellowstone Engraved: Images that Popularized Jackson, Moran, and America's First National Park" is a traveling exhibition from the collection of Lee Silliman.

The exhibition features antique engravings that vividly portray Yellowstone National Park during its first three decades, from 1871 to 1902.

As members of Ferdinand Hayden's 1871 governmental exploratory party, William

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Henry Jackson and Thomas Moran were, respectively, the first photographer and painter to render Yellowstone National Park's geysers, canyons, waterfalls and mountains into visual imagery for which the American public clamored.

The engraving process was used to create derivative artwork from Jackson's photos and Moran's paintings. That artwork graced numerous books, magazines and newspapers of the day so the world could see vicariously the acclaimed "wonderland" of the American continent.

The exhibition also features Yellowstone engravings by other artists of lesser renown, who were likewise drawn to this icon of Americanism.

The public is invited to two free lectures in conjunction with the "Yellowstone Engraved" exhibition.

At noon Thursday, July 19, in the Meloy Gallery, Silliman, who is a curator as well as a collector, will discuss the exhibition.

Author Michael Punke will present "1894: Yellowstone Park and the Battle to Save the Buffalo" at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 14, in the Meloy Gallery.

MMAC's summer hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no charge for admission, and free parking is available near the northwest corner of the PAR/TV Center.

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For more information, call 406-243-2019 or go to

<http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum>.

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